

KIDNEY BIOPSY FINDINGS IN PATIENTS WITH PRIMARY SJÖGREN SYNDROME

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OBJECTIVES

Renal involvement in Primary Sjögren Syndrome (pSS) varies widely from 2 to 67 percent. The most common presentation of renal involvement is tubulointerstitial nephritis (TIN). Glomerulonephritis (GN) is unusual and it is associated with a worse prognosis. In this study, renal biopsy findings of a cohort of patients with primary Sjögren syndrome were analyzed and correlated with their renal manifestations.

METHODS

A retrospective study was conducted. The clinical records of 397 consecutive patients who underwent renal biopsy between 2000-2016 due to renal impairment were retrospectively reassessed. The clinical records of all the 110 patients with pSS followed in the Rheumatology Department were simultaneously reviewed. The inclusion criteria were a established diagnosis of pSS confirmed by an expert rheumatologist. They also had to meet the 2002 and 2016 American-European Consensus Classification criteria. Exclusion criteria included the evidence of other rheumatologic/connective tissue disorders, or the presence of anti-DNA/anti-Sm antibodies.

6 patients met criteria. Their kidney biopsy specimens were reassessed by a renal pathologist, who confirmed the findings in each biopsy report through independent review. The clinical presentation of the renal disease was evaluated by an expert nephrologist, including clinical, therapeutic and laboratory data. Response to treatment through follow-up was also analyzed.

RESULTS

The 6 selected patients were females, with a mean age of 43.5 years. The mean follow-up was 5.8 years. Sjögren syndrome preceded renal manifestations by a mean of 7.8 years. Persistent non-nephrotic proteinuria was the indication for kidney biopsy in all cases. The mean patients' serum creatinine concentration was 0.83 mg/dl. eGFR <60mL/min/1.73 m² was only observed in one case. GN and TIN were concomitantly identified in every biopsy (Table 1). Chronic TIN was the most frequent finding (83.3%). A *full house pattern* was found in 3 biopsies. All patients exhibited normal creatinine levels and GFR range at last follow-up. All patients presented alterations of urine sample at the biopsy time. The clinical manifestation of tubulointerstitial involvement could not be evaluated due to the absence of data.

CONCLUSIONS

TIN is the most common finding in pSS. A different range of glomerular involvement may appear. In our series, the glomerular involvement in Sjögren syndrome does not seem to be related to a worse prognosis.

The *full house pattern* can be found in GN secondary to pSS. Taking this into account, a close follow-up is mandatory because of the risk of progression to systemic lupus erythematosus.

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Table 1.

Patient number	Comorbidities	Age at the time of biopsy	Biopsy findings			Follow-up period (years)	Renal function at the time of biopsy				Renal function at last follow-up				Post biopsy treatment
			Glomerular involvement	Patrón Full Pattern	TIN		Creatinine (mg/dl)	Urine sample			Creatinine (mg/dl)	Urine sample			
								Protein (mg/dl)	Red blood cells	White blood cells		Protein (mg/dl)	Red blood cells	White blood cells	
1	Alzheimer disease, osteoporosis, polyarthritis	74	MCD	-	Chronic	7	0,9	0,7	-	-	0,57	0	-	-	GCS
2	Myoclonic seizures	24	Focal proliferative pattern	+	Chronic	2	0,54	75	+	+	0,86	30	-	-	GCS, MMF, HC
3	Pulmonary embolism, hyperfibrinogenaemia, prothrombin mutation (G20210A), familiar hypercholesterolemia	39	MPGN	-	Chronic	2	0,81	160	+	-	0,75	0	-	-	HC
4	Asthma, tension headache, primary hyperparathyroidism treated by parathyroidectomy, nephrolithiasis	45	MPGN	+	Acute and chronic	0,5	0,72	100	+	+	0,84	200	-	-	MMF, GCS
5	Osteoporosis	42	Diffuse proliferative pattern	+	Chronic	11	0,52	50	+	+	0,68	0	+	+	MMF, GCS
6	Arterial hypertension, recurrent pneumonias and urine tract infection, osteoporosis, depression	37	MPGN type 1 with epithelial crescents	-	Chronic	11	1,5	100	+	+	0,98	30	+	+	MMF, GCS, CP

Abbreviations: MCD, minimal changes disease; MPGN, membranoproliferative glomerulonephritis; TIN tubulointerstitial nephritis; HC, Hydroxychloroquine; GCS, Glucocorticoids, MMF, Mycophenolate mofetil, CP, Cyclophosphamide

